

DETAILED ACTION

1. In response to the BPAI decision mailed on 07/31/2009, wherein the obviousness rejection of claims 1-9, 11-18, and 21 was affirmed and the obviousness rejection of claims 19 and 20 was reversed, and pursuant to MPEP 1214.06, the following is/are set forth:

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with David Crompton on 12/08/2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1-9, 11-18, and 21 should read (Cancelled).

Claim 19 should read:

A modular guide catheter, comprising:
an elongate shaft having a proximal region, a distal region and a lumen
extending therebetween, the elongate shaft having an external surface;
a plurality of support tracks disposed on the external surface of the
elongate shaft, the support tracks axially aligned with the elongate shaft; and

a plurality of support ribs that are configured to be removably disposed over at least a portion of the plurality of support tracks,

wherein each of the support tracks have a cross-section profile configured to permit each of the support ribs to move axially with respect to each support track while limiting relative radial movement

~~The modular guide catheter of claim 9,~~ wherein each of the plurality of support ribs comprises a fluorinated polyethylene polymer.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 19 and 20 are allowed.
4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the prior art does not disclose, teach, and/or fairly suggest a modular guide catheter, comprising *inter alia*: an elongate shaft with a lumen; a plurality of support tracks disposed in the axial direction on the external surface of the shaft; and a plurality of support ribs removably disposed over the support tracks and comprising a fluorinated polyethylene polymer, wherein the support tracks have a cross-sectional profile permitting the ribs to move axially therealong while limiting radial movement.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JEFFREY G. HOEKSTRA whose telephone number is (571)272-7232. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Max Hindenburg can be reached on (571)272-4726. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jeffrey G Hoekstra/
Examiner, Art Unit 3736

/Max Hindenburg/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3736